




Speech By
Mark Boothman

MEMBER FOR THEODORE

Record of Proceedings, 2 May 2019

**STATE DEVELOPMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURAL
INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (3.50 pm): I, too, rise to make a contribution to the debate on this very important report that affects a lot of my constituents and businesses in the wonderful electorate of Theodore. The Auditor-General tabled this report on 14 February 2019. It is very interesting looking through this report and seeing some of the issues that the member for Burleigh highlighted, especially when it comes to the extreme debt levels that the energy providers have put on Queenslanders. It is very concerning.

I was talking to one of my wonderful local businesses recently. He owns a corner store and is doing it very tough at the moment. Business is not booming. He has a lot of competition out there. Recently, another large supermarket chain set up in close proximity to his business. As he said, obviously that has taken business off him, but the day-to-day running costs of his business are extreme. He said, 'Mark, I find it very, very tough to survive.' He employs some wonderful young people in his business. He gives them a chance to get their first job, get themselves a little bit of pocket money to get their lives on track and on the way. Because of the way the cost of electricity in this state is gouging his profits, destroying his profit margins, he said to me, 'I'm not sure how long I can hold up this massive tide against my business.'

One of the lovely ladies near Oxenford was talking about Queensland being this absolute powerhouse of exports and minerals. I find it quite interesting as there was a great article in the *Courier-Mail* today by Steve Wardill, the state affairs editor. In this article he highlighted how, despite the significant decline in the Australian dollar, over the same period the wholesale price of electricity has actually doubled. This has had severe impacts on the export commodities of this state. He goes on to say—

The figures show movements through the port—

of Townsville—

fell from 12.9 million tonnes in 2011/12 to 6.7 million tonnes in 2017-18.

This is a massive drop in export resources, something that drives and fuels our economy. The funny thing is, as Mr Wardill highlighted, the price of wholesale electricity has more than doubled since then and this is having a real impact on industries in our state, making it very hard for them to be competitive.

Those opposite talk about electricity asset sales, but back in 2007 the Labor Party sold wind energy assets for \$460 million. In 2007 they also sold the gas assets for \$268 million, PowerDirect for \$1.2 billion, Sun Gas for \$75 million, Sun Retail for \$1.2 billion and Allgas for \$535 million. It just shows who is actually the one selling the assets. It was not those on this side of the chamber at all; it was

those on the other side. It was the members on the government benches, members of their political persuasion, who sold these assets. It is funny that the Labor Party members in this state keep on complaining about energy prices and assets sales yet they are the ones who sold the assets.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Just hold for a moment, member for Theodore. We are debating the Auditor-General's report from 2017-18; I remind you of that. You can now finish your contribution.

Mr BOOTHMAN: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I certainly take your guidance. However, the issue remains that this government is price gouging my local small businesses and destroying their livelihoods and squeezing them out of existence.